



NATIONAL RURAL
HEALTH
ALLIANCE INC.

Media Release

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Independents urged to champion rural health shakeup

Rural GP Dr Jenny May, re-elected chair of the 31-member National Rural Health Alliance, will tomorrow meet with New England MP Tony Windsor to discuss the drive for equal funding for the bush and a plan to ensure the sustainability of rural communities.

On Tuesday she will meet at his request with a second independent MP, Rob Oakeshott, Member for Lyne.

“Rural communities are at a crossroads and no one appreciates that more than Tony Windsor and Rob Oakeshott,” Dr May said last night. “Experience has shown that rural Australians know how to do more with less – they are experienced campaigners in the battle against adversity.

“After three days of constructive engagement with the NRHA Council in Canberra, there is much to discuss both with Mr Windsor and Mr Oakeshott in the wider interests of the rural communities that are now being given overdue attention.”

The Alliance is expected to provide the MPs with a raft of proposals aimed at delivering better health services in rural and remote areas of greatest need.

Among the issues the Alliance will canvas are:

- nation-building investment in an affordable national broadband system capable of providing the community with e-health applications and a platform for business;
- delivery of health infrastructure to rural and remote areas on the basis of the relative needs of each community;
- commitment to health reform including federal responsibility for funding primary care, aged care and integrated care in smaller communities;
- an integrated package of measures to rebuild and redistribute the health workforce needed to service rural, regional and remote areas; and
- an increased focus on oral health, including workforce numbers and distribution.

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